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UTILITY APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES PATENT
FOR

Mobile Communication System and Mobile Terminal Having Function of Inactivating Mobile Communication
Viruses, and Method Thereof

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MOBILE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AND MOBILE TERMINAL HAVING
FUNCTION OF INACTIVATING MOBILE COMMUNICATION VIRUSES,
AND METHOD THEREOF

5 Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a mobile communication system and a mobile terminal which are capable of inactivating or curing mobile communication viruses and a method thereof.

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Prior Art of the Invention

Generally, a virus vaccine program is downloaded from, e.g., a personal computer and installed in a mobile terminal 15 to cure a mobile communication virus (hereinafter, referred to as simply "virus") in a mobile terminal such as mobile phones or PDAs. Such a method is very inconvenient in that a user has to download a new version of virus vaccine program by himself/herself whenever the virus vaccine program is updated.

20 Also, since system level components such as a mobile switching center (MSC) can not currently identify or detect whether or not data externally transmitted, for example, from a mobile terminal is infected by viruses, the mobile communication system may be infected by data having viruses, 25 and thus mobile terminals communicating therewith as well as the mobile communication system may be infected by viruses.

Summary of the Invention

It is an object of the present invention to provide a mobile communication system and method for inactivating or curing mobile communication viruses.

5 It is another object of the present invention to provide a mobile terminal of inactivating or curing mobile communication viruses.

It is further object of the present invention to provide a method of updating a virus vaccine program.

10 In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a mobile communication system for inactivating a virus, including: a database associated with the mobile communication system, for storing at least one virus vaccine program; and a virus monitoring unit associated
15 with the mobile communication system, for checking virus infection of received data, analyzing virus information, choosing one of virus vaccine programs that are stored in the database and inactivating the virus.

Further, in accordance with another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for inactivating viruses in a mobile communication system, including: (a) at a virus monitoring unit, detecting virus infection of data received from a mobile terminal; (b) at the virus monitoring unit, analyzing virus information when data are virus infected; and
25 (c), at the virus monitoring unit, choosing suitable one of virus vaccine programs that are stored in a database according to the virus information to inactivate the virus.

Further, in accordance with still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a mobile terminal, including: receiving a virus infection notification from a virus monitoring unit and detecting a virus infection of the 5 mobile terminal to inactivate viruses by using a virus vaccine program stored therein; and transmitting a vaccine request message to the virus monitoring unit to receive a virus vaccine program suitable for the detected virus to thereby inactivate the virus by using the received virus vaccine 10 program when the virus vaccine program previously stored in the mobile terminal can not inactivate the virus.

Further, in accordance with still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for inactivating viruses in a mobile communication system, including: (a) at a 15 mobile terminal, detecting a virus infection of data before transmitting data and inactivating the virus using a vaccine program stored in the mobile terminal when the virus is detected; (b) at the mobile terminal, sending a vaccine request message to a virus monitoring unit when the vaccine 20 program stored in the mobile terminal cannot inactivate the virus; and (c) at the mobile terminal, receiving a new vaccine program which is transmitted from the virus monitoring unit in response to the vaccine request message.

Further, in accordance with one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for updating a virus vaccine program in a mobile communication system, including: 25 (a) at a mobile terminal, receiving a vaccine information

request message from a virus monitoring unit; (b) at the mobile terminal, sending a vaccine information response message including vaccine program information and capability information of the mobile terminal to a virus monitoring unit 5 in response to the vaccine information request message; and (c) at the mobile terminal, receiving a vaccine program chosen according to the vaccine program information and the capability information of the mobile terminal.

Further, in accordance with another aspect of the present 10 invention, there is provided a method for updating a virus vaccine program in a mobile communication system, including: (a) at a virus monitoring unit, sending a vaccine information request message to a mobile terminal; (b) at the virus monitoring unit, receiving a vaccine information response message including vaccine program information and capability information of the mobile terminal; and (c) at the virus monitoring unit, sending a vaccine program chosen according to the vaccine program information and the capability information 15 of the mobile terminal to the mobile terminal.

Further, in accordance with still another aspect of the 20 present invention, there is provided a method for updating a virus vaccine program in a mobile communication system, including: (a) at a mobile terminal, sending a vaccine update request message including vaccine program information and capability information of the mobile terminal to a virus monitoring unit; and (b) at the mobile terminal, receiving a vaccine program chosen according to the vaccine program 25

information and the capability information of the mobile terminal from the virus monitoring unit.

Further, in accordance with still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for updating a virus vaccine program in a mobile communication system, including: (a) at a virus monitoring unit, receiving a vaccine update request message including vaccine program information and capability information of the mobile terminal from the mobile terminal; and (b) at the virus monitoring unit, sending a vaccine program chosen according to the vaccine program information and the capability information of the mobile terminal to the mobile terminal.

Brief Description of the Drawings

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The above and other objects and features of the instant invention will become apparent from the following description of preferred embodiments taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

20 Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing a mobile communication system for inactivating or curing mobile communication viruses in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

Figs. 2 and 3 are flow charts showing procedures of inactivating or curing viruses in the mobile communication system in accordance with the present invention;

25 Fig. 4 is a flow chart showing a network-initiated update method for updating a virus vaccine program in accordance with

the present invention; and

Fig. 5 is a flow chart showing a user-initiated update method for updating a virus vaccine program in accordance with the present invention.

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Preferred Embodiment of the Invention

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing a mobile communication system for inactivating or curing mobile communication viruses (hereinafter, referred to as simply "virus") in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

The mobile communication system of Fig. 1 includes at least one mobile terminal 111 to 114, at least one base station (BS) 121 to 122 and a mobile switching center (MSC) 130.

The mobile terminal 111 to 114 respectively stores a virus vaccine program for curing or inactivating viruses in the mobile terminal and checks whether it is infected by viruses preferably before transmitting data.

The BSs 121 to 122 and/or the MSC 130 is functionally associated with a database (DB) 131 and a virus monitoring unit (VMU) 132. However, the system-level components with which the DB 131 and the VMU 132 are associated are not limited to the BS and the MSC. For example, the VMU 132 can be configured to be associated to a router which is connected to the Internet.

The DB 131 stores various vaccine programs and is updated

and managed by a system operator.

The VMU 132 substantially controls a function of detecting viruses and inactivating or curing viruses and a function of updating a virus vaccine program.

5 Operation of the mobile communication system of Fig. 1 is explained below with reference to Figs. 2 and 3.

Data are transmitted from at least one of mobile terminals 111 to 114 to the corresponding base stations 121 and 122 at step S201.

10 Even though it is described that data is transmitted between two mobile terminals, data can be transmitted through the wireless Internet, and a kind of a data transmitting device is not limited to the mobile terminal in accordance with the present invention.

15 Then, it is determined whether or not a virus is found or detected in the data at step S202. If a virus is detected in the data, information (e.g., identity) of the virus is analyzed at step S203. A virus vaccine program suitable for an identified virus is read from the DB 131 at step S204. The 20 virus in data inactivated or cured by using the read virus vaccine program at step S205. Then, the cured data is transmitted to a destination mobile terminal, and the virus monitoring unit 132 notifies the mobile stations 111 to 114 of virus infection at step S206. The mobile terminals which 25 receive the notification perform operation of inactivating or curing the virus therein at step S207.

The mobile terminal which receives the virus infection

notification performs operation of detecting viruses. If it is determined as infected, the mobile station determines whether it can be inactivated or cured by the vaccine program stored therein at step S301.

5 If the virus can not be inactivated or cured by the vaccine program stored in the mobile terminal, the mobile terminal send a vaccine request message to the VMU 132 through the base station at step S302. At step S303, the VMU 132 chooses a suitable virus vaccine program from the DB 131 and 10 transmits to the mobile terminal or updates the virus vaccine program over the air when the virus vaccine program is an old version. At step S304, the mobile terminal inactivates or cures the virus using the downloaded vaccine program.

15 The vaccine request message includes a vaccine field that states version information of the virus vaccine program in the mobile terminal, a virus information field that states identity of virus and a capability field that includes, for example, a band, mode information and operating system (OS) information of the mobile terminal.

20 The VMU 132 chooses suitable one of the virus vaccine programs that are stored in the DB 131 according to the virus information field and the capability field in the vaccine request message. Then, the VMU 132 transmits the selected virus vaccine program to the mobile terminal and updates the 25 virus vaccine program in the mobile terminal.

Also, when the mobile terminal detects or finds the virus by itself but can not inactivate or cure the virus by the

virus vaccine program stored therein, the mobile terminal can send the vaccine request message to the VMU 132 to receive or update the virus vaccine program by the way of Fig. 3.

Meanwhile, there are two methods of updating virus vaccine program stored in the mobile terminal: a network-initiated method; and a user-initiated method.

Fig. 4 is a flow chart showing a network-initiated update method for updating a virus vaccine program stored in the mobile terminal in accordance with the present invention.

The network-initiated update method is executed by a service provider when a new version of the vaccine program is available or a new virus appears.

When the vaccine program in the DB 131 is updated at step S401, the VMU 132 sends a vaccine information request message to the mobile terminals 111 to 114 at step S402. In response to the vaccine information request message, the mobile terminals 111 to 114 send vaccine information response messages including the vaccine program information and the capability information to the VMU 132 at step S403.

At step S404, the VMU 132 chooses suitable one the virus vaccine programs that are stored in the DB 131 according to the vaccine program information and the capability information of the mobile terminal. Then, the VMU 132 sends the selected virus vaccine program to the mobile terminal, thereby updating the virus vaccine program in the mobile terminal.

Fig. 5 is a flow chart showing a user-initiated update method for updating virus vaccine program stored in the mobile

in accordance with the present invention.

A user requests updating of the vaccine program at step S501, the mobile terminals 111 to 114 send a vaccine update request message including the vaccine program information and 5 the capability information to the VMU 132 at step S502.

At step S503, the VMU 132 chooses a corresponding vaccine program from the DB 131 according to the capability of the mobile terminal. Then, the VMU 132 sends the selected virus vaccine program to the mobile terminal, thereby updating the 10 virus vaccine program in the mobile terminal. The vaccine program update is executed over the air.

As described herein before, the mobile communication system of the present invention has the following advantages. Since the data base storing various vaccine programs and the 15 virus monitoring unit are associated with the system level component such as a mobile switching center, virus infection of data transmitted is detected in real time, and a vaccine program suitable for detected virus is provided to the mobile terminal, whereby the mobile communication network and the 20 mobile terminals therewith can be protected from mobile communication viruses.

Also, since virus vaccine programs are timely updated over the air (OTA) whenever a new version of vaccine program is available, it is convenient to users, and both the mobile 25 communication system and the mobile terminal are safe from viruses as well.

While the present invention has been shown and described

with respect to the particular embodiments, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that many changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.